

# Myers, Barton, III Papers

Barton Myers III Papers  
1988-2006 and undated

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## Title Statement

Myers, Barton, III Papers Guide to the Barton Myers III Papers Mss. Acc. 2005.23

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## Profile Description

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## Descriptive Summary

### Unit ID

Mss. Acc. 2005.23

### Unit ID

/repositories/2/resources/2463

### Unit Date

1988-2006 and undated

### Language

English

### Creator

Myers, Barton, 1853-1927

### Extent

0.50 Linear Feet

### Extent

11 items.

### Repository

Special Collections Research Center

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**Acquisition Information:**

Gift. 2005.23 2006.80

**Preferred Citation:**

Barton Myers III Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Swem Library, College of William and Mary.

**Biographical Information:**

Barton Myers, Sr. was the eldest son of Julianna Grammar Barton (Myers) and Moses Myers. He was born in Norfolk VA on March 29, 1853. He was to become one of Norfolk's most prominent citizens of the 20th century as a member of a family with a long tradition of public service. Barton Myers is the great-great grandson of Moses Myers and Eliza Judd (Myers).

The family patriarch, elder Moses Myers bears mention here. He moved to Norfolk from New York City in 1786, was engaged in foreign trade, and became a prominent merchant and ship owner. He married Eliza Judd in 1791. Before his death in 1833, Moses Myers served as president of the Norfolk City Council and acted as an agent for the French government for the purchase of tobacco. He was commissioned colonel of a regiment of Virginia volunteers, was appointed Vice Consul for Denmark and for the Netherlands, and served as Collector of Customs for the Port of Norfolk. Moses Myers built a fine colonial mansion at the corner of Bank and Freemason Streets. Members of the Myers family occupied the house 331 Bank St. for generations. In 1892, Barton Myers, Sr. restored the mansion to its original grandeur.

At age twenty-three, Barton Myers, Sr. became an agent for a Norfolk shipping firm. By 1878, he served the port of Norfolk as vice-consul for the nations of Great Britain, Brazil, and the Netherlands. Soon thereafter, he joined Myers & Co., the family business involved in shipping cotton and other goods to Europe. In 1882, he married Katherine M. Baldwin of Winchester, VA and together they raised two sons and five daughters. His sons, Robert and Barton, Jr., would later join him in his business and consular duties.

Myers became involved in Norfolk politics and was elected to the Norfolk Common Council as a member of the Conservative Democratic Party in 1880. Elected president of the Council in 1881, he served there for five years overseeing improvements to city streets, waterworks, and the police and fire departments. He became Mayor of Norfolk in 1885 and brought about the city's first expansion with the annexation of the suburb of Brambleton.

Myers also served his community in private life. He was active in the Episcopal Church and was a founding member of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities in 1888. In 1885, he helped establish the first YMCA in Norfolk and in 1923; he promoted the preservation of Ft. Norfolk for use as a public park and helped organize the Naval YMCA with Katherine serving as chair of its women's auxiliary. Katherine assisted him in many of his community ventures including founding a free children's hospital in Virginia Beach. Along with his daughter, Frances, Myers founded a Montessori school in Norfolk.

Myers saw the potential of Norfolk as a great cotton port while working as a shipping agent. In 1880, he organized the Norfolk Knitting and Cotton Manufacturing Company, the city's first cotton textile mill. He was later president of the Norfolk Yarn Mills. Cotton had to be compacted into large bales for shipment, but few cotton compresses existed in the area. To meet this need, Myers organized the Shippers' Cotton Compress Company in 1881, serving as its president for ten years.

Myers acted as an early leader in Norfolk real estate development was instrumental in the development the suburbs of Ghent, Lafayette Park, Lambert's Point and the waterfront areas of Norfolk. He worked tirelessly to promote his city and was responsible for bringing the 1893 Naval Rendezvous to Norfolk as part of a series of festivals leading up to the Chicago Columbian Exposition. The event provided Myers with valuable experience that he used as executive director during the planning for the 1907 Jamestown Exposition. Myers advocated raising awareness of Virginia as the site of the first English settlement in North America by commemorating its 300th anniversary with a massive celebration.

Perhaps the most important contributions made by Myers through his forty years of public service were with the Chamber of Commerce as its president from 1916 to 1920. During that time, the chamber brought industry and trade into the city. A Docks Commission, established in 1916, modernized the city's port. With Myers at the head, the Commission, constructed modern coal piers and grain elevators and arranged the extension of the Norfolk and Portsmouth Belt Line Railroad to the terminal site at Sewell's Point. Myers considered this work his greatest accomplishment. He worked on railroad projects connecting the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad to Portsmouth in 1886 and the Virginian Railroad to Norfolk in 1905. These railroads brought large coal shipments to Norfolk, transforming the city into a major coal port.

In his capacity with the Chamber of Commerce, Myers strengthened Norfolk's military ties. He served on the committee to build an army base at Ft. Story. In 1916, he lobbied to get the Naval Operating Base built on the former Jamestown Exposition grounds. During World War I, the War Department used Myers as an agent for purchasing additional lands for military bases. He supported the war effort by finding employment and housing for war workers, organizing war work schedules, and aiding Liberty Loan and Red Cross drives.

Barton Myers, Sr. died in 1927.

Further information about this individual or organization may be available in the Special Collections Research Center Wiki: [http://scdbwiki.swem.wm.edu/wiki/index.php/Barton\\_Myers](http://scdbwiki.swem.wm.edu/wiki/index.php/Barton_Myers).

## Scope and Contents

2005.23

Barton Myers III material. Magazines including articles concerning Barton Myers III and his work.

2006.80

Copies of articles about Barton Myers in the New York Times, 9/28/2006, and the Virginian Pilot, 9/24/2006. The Virginian Pilot article concerns Myers life and his design for an addition to Christ and St. Luke's Episcopal Churches in Norfolk, Virginia. Also includes exhibit catalog, "Barton Myers: The Architecture of the Theater" at the Instituto Italiano di Cultura, Los Angeles, California. 3 items.

## Related Materials:

Mss. 98 M99

Myers-Burrage-Graham Papers (I) Groups A, B and C

Myers II

## Keywords

Architecture, Domestic--Virginia

Norfolk (Va.)--History--20th century

Myers family

Myers, Barton

## Description of Subordinate Components

### Features in Architectural Magazines

**Unit ID** id242389

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/214185

**Unit Date** 1988-2000

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

### Books Detailing Projects

**Unit ID** id242390

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/214186

**Unit Date** 2003-2006 and undated

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 2 (folder)

**Newspaper Articles**

**Unit ID** id242391

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/214187

**Unit Date** September 2006

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 3 (folder)